

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A system for personalizing an electrical device, comprising:
2 an electrical device having a plurality of button openings that are adapted to
3 receive buttons that control operation of the electrical device; and
4 a plurality of removable buttons that can be interchangeably disposed within
5 the button openings of the electrical device, the buttons being provided with a variety
6 of discrete features so as to be selectable by a user for provision on the electrical
7 device in an arrangement chosen by the user to personalize the device as desired by
8 the user.

1 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the button features comprise a variety
2 of colors.

1 3. The system of claim 1, wherein the button features comprise a variety
2 of icons.

1 4. The system of claim 1, wherein the button features comprise a variety
2 of textures.

1 5. The system of claim 1, wherein the button features comprise a variety
2 of shapes.

1 6. The system of claim 1, wherein the button features comprise a variety
2 of tactile qualities.

1 7. The system of claim 1, wherein the button features comprise Braille
2 indicia.

1 8. An electrical device, comprising:
2 a plurality of button openings adapted to receive buttons that can be used to
3 control operation of the electrical device; and
4 a plurality of removable buttons, the buttons being encoded so as to be
5 configured to identify a particular functionality to the electrical device when disposed
6 within a button opening of the device such that particular buttons can be used to
7 initiate particular functionalities irrespective of the button opening in which it is
8 disposed.

1 9. The electrical device of claim 8, wherein the buttons are mechanically
2 encoded.

1 10. The electrical device of claim 8, wherein the buttons are electrically
2 encoded.

1 11. The electrical device of claim 8, wherein the buttons are provided with
2 discrete features so as to be selectable by a user for provision on the electrical device
3 in an arrangement chosen by the user to personalize the device as desired by the user.

1 12. The electrical device of claim 8, wherein the functionalities pertain to
2 emitting particular sounds when the buttons are depressed.

1 13. An electrical device, comprising:
2 a plurality of button openings adapted to receive buttons that can be used to
3 control operation of the electrical device; and
4 functionality sensing elements provided in the button openings that are
5 adapted to determine a particular functionality that is associated with encoded,
6 removable buttons that can be disposed within the button openings.

1 14. The electrical device of claim 13, wherein the functionality sensing
2 elements comprise pin openings adapted to receive pins of the removable buttons.

1 15. A removable button adapted for interchangeable use with an electrical
2 device, the button being encoded so as to be assigned a particular functionality such
3 that when the button is disposed within a button opening of the electrical device, the
4 electrical device can determine the assigned functionality and will be configured to
5 initiate the functionality when the button is depressed.

1 16. The electrical device of claim 15, wherein the buttons are mechanically
2 encoded.

1 17. The electrical device of claim 15, wherein the buttons are electrically
2 encoded.

1 18. A method for personalizing an electrical device having a plurality of
2 button openings that are adapted to receive interchangeable, encoded buttons,
3 comprising the steps of:
4 receiving selection of a particular device functionality to be associated with a
5 particular encoded button; and
6 assigning the selected device functionality to the encoded button such that
7 when the encoded button is disposed within a button opening of the electrical device
8 and depressed, the selected functionality will be performed by the electrical device.

1 19. The method of claim 18, wherein the step of receiving selection of a
2 particular device functionality comprises receiving selection of a particular sound that
3 is to be emitted by the electrical device when the encoded button is depressed.

1 20. The method of claim 18, wherein the selected functionality will be
2 performed by the electrical device when the encoded button is depressed irrespective
3 of the particular button opening in which the button is disposed.

1 21. A method for personalizing an electrical device, comprising the steps
2 of:
3 receiving a record command input by a user;
4 detecting selection of various device buttons after receiving the record
5 command, each device button being associated with a discrete device functionality;
6 and
7 assigning each of the functionalities associated with the selected buttons to a
8 further button so that the further button is programmed to initiate performance of each
9 of the functionalities when depressed by a user.

1 22. The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of receiving a
2 selection of a button to be programmed from the user and assigning the functionalities
3 to the selected button.